

NorthWest Initiative

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HOUSE BILL 5176 and 5177

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My name is Monica Jahner, and I work for A.R.R.O a grass roots Re Entry program in Lansing and I sit on the Corrections Advisory Committee and I feel that it is important that these bills include County Jail prisoners as well as MDOC clients.

The idea behind these bills is excellent and is truly needed to protect the public safety. However, it doesn't include all clients that need I.D. As an outreach worker, I have had the challenge of trying to obtain the necessary documents for state I.D. and it is just as important for a released ex felon from the county to have ID as it is MDOC clients. We just had a CSC offender that was released from the county (for not registering), he is mentally ill, homeless, and released with NO ID, and he couldn't register again because he didn't have an I.D. This man is a danger to himself and he is walking the streets of Lansing without I.D. Ex felons without I.D is a threat to the public safety, but when they have no money or nothing to get the ID with, what are they supposed to do? It is important that the process is started upon incarceration.

The bill only includes Correctional Facility clients, and there is no provision for County Jail inmates. Working with ex felons and PA 511 I have found that the majority of clients being released from jail don't have I.D and our released without any I.D. The PA 511 program was designed to help reduce the prison population by providing other options instead of prison, yet no provisions are made in the bill to help with I.D. The majority of clients in the county jail serving time are MDOC clients as they are on OTIS, and charged by the State of Michigan. Any prisoner being released from any incarceration is re entering society.

There are many county jail inmates that are parole violators that are NOT sent back to prison, by definition they are MDOC clients and on parole, yet there is nothing in the bill there to assist in getting I.D. Many parolees loose their I.D. upon incarceration, so they have to start over.

There is NO consistency with the Secretary of State offices on what is needed to get an I.D, which has become a major problem. I was speaking to an exceptions person at the Secretary of State and he didn't know that the Michigan Register for CSC was on line and had a photo on it, yet he wouldn't let that be a photo ID to get the state I.D. The only two agencies that have access to OTIS are the MDOC and Michigan State Police, so the photo would be accurate. It is worthy to note that photo on the prisoner I.D is the same one used on Otis. In the Ingham County Jail, they have a wrist band with a photo on it. Can provisions be made for ALL county jails to provide the wrist band photo I.D, or make a card like the MDOC so that this can be used for the photo I.D.

As I stated many county jail prisoner and parolees that are violated loose their I.D in the transition. It would be beneficial to the state for the Secretary of State to keep a copy of all the documents used to get state I.D. so that you don't have to start from scratch to get a new I.D. There is a photo on record at the Secretary of State and you can identify the client by this photo and compare to OTIS. The county jail can further identify their clients as they take finger prints, so they can be used to help in this process.

I pray that this committee will include ALL prisoners being released from any incarceration. When someone is released from incarceration and they can't get I.D it holds up their progress in reentering society. You can be arrested for not having I.D and this only causes police contact and unnecessary incarceration. There are so many ways that this could be implemented, within the agencies and beneficial to those re entering society.

Sincerely and respectfully submitted